
At the Junction of Personality Theories: Working with Juvenile Offenders

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Rule breaking (Tremblay 2010), impulsivity, need for stimulation, social immaturity (Forth and Burke 1998; Skeem and Cauffman 2003), and oppositional behavior within the context of autonomy seeking (Chen 2010) and identity development (Josselson 1989) are considered by many developmentalists to be important components of normative adolescence. In general, familial and societal sensitivity to these behaviors is rather high and societal structures tend to exercise a considerable amount of tolerance and forgiveness toward such developmental events when they occur during adolescence (Wästerfors 2009). Yet, the majority (if not all) of the developed and many developing countries (Feld 1999) have a juvenile justice system (United Nations 1985, 1990a, b), according to which certain acts committed by juveniles—typically defined as individuals up to 17 years of age (United Nations 1989)—are singled out because of the severity or repeated nature of their acts against societal rules, and these acts are dealt with legally. There are multiple points of entry into the juvenile justice system; the individuals within this system are referred to as juvenile offenders, meaning that they have offended societal rules and these offenses were serious (or frequent) enough not to

be forgiven by the society. Yet, the fact of committing such serious or frequent offenses is, perhaps, one of the very few common denominators of this relatively small group of children and youth. Juvenile offenders vary tremendously in the offenses they commit and the trajectories that bring them to and follow from these offenses (Le Blanc 1998); correspondingly, understanding and characterizing their trajectories might enhance attempts at prevention and rehabilitation.

This relatively small portion of children and youth (again, typically ranging between 10 and 17 years of age, but with variations between states even within a single country, such as the USA) attracts a considerable amount of interest and consumes a considerable amount of resources in modern societies. This is explained by a number of factors, among which are the propensity of developed countries to rehabilitate rather than punish their children and youth (with rehabilitation being much more expensive than punishment), and to attempt to prevent future crimes, given that a substantial portion of adult criminals have had encounters with juvenile courts. This interest is also driven by the accumulating evidence, derived mostly from large-scale longitudinal birth cohort studies (e.g., Wolfgang et al. 1972, 1987) as well as research on repeat offenders (DeLisi 2001, 2005; Loeber and Farrington 1998) that the majority of all crimes and, in particular serious crimes, are committed by a relatively small set of juvenile offenders (Moffitt 1993), both when they are juveniles and then later in their lives as adults. To emphasize what

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appears to be a life-long trajectory of crime, these individuals are referred to in the literature as career criminals (DeLisi 2005). They are often characterized by a set of academic problems (e.g., truancy, underachievement, suspension, and dropout) as well as mental health problems (e.g., substance use problems and a variety of developmental and personality disorders), and are disproportionately victims of violence themselves.

Due to the accumulation of data substantiating the observations above, the science of criminology has started paying much more attention to sources of individual differences in all juvenile offenders and, more particularly, in serious offenders and career criminals. The field, previously dominated primarily by sociological theories of crime, is now much more balanced; today, there are numerous theories of juvenile antisocial behavior that both originate from and contribute to the field of personality (Caspi et al. 1994; Miller and Lynam 2001; Raine 2002). These theories have emerged from a substantial literature reporting on studies carried out within particular major personality theories (e.g., dispositional (trait) perspective, psychodynamic, social cognitive) and their crossroads. These studies unfold at the junction of various traditions of personality psychology, capitalizing on the multitude of approaches developed within Allport's (1937) classical subdivision of nomothetic and idiographic approaches to personality.

The goal of this essay is to provide an abbreviated overview, a snapshot, of applications, both current and potential, of various theories of personality to the field of juvenile forensic psychology, specifically, in the field's attempt to understand sources of individual differences in juvenile offenders. The essay does not intend to carry out a critical comparative analysis or to arrive to a particular recommendation. It is meant to provide a description of the current "state of affairs" with regard to the junctions of various theories of personality and both psychological research and practice with juvenile offenders. It is also intended to contextualize specific constructs, theories, and assessments, particularly the latter, since these are often used in forensic practice in a decontextualized way, without

recognition or acknowledgment of the particular theoretical framework in which and for which these assessments were developed.

Correspondingly, the essay is structured as a sequential overview of various personality-oriented approaches to understanding heterogeneity among juvenile offenders. It is important to clarify here that behaviors that are classified as offenses (either criminal offenses, i.e., violations of the law, or status offenses, i.e., demonstrations of behaviors that violate the status of the minor—an individual under a particular age that is considered to be the age of majority) vary in different societies. Moreover, once again, juvenile offenders constitute a small portion of all juveniles,¹ although many juveniles, in lieu of developmental transitions into adulthood, break norms. The notion promoted in this essay is that juvenile offenses arise, as it were atop an iceberg, where societal, communal, family, and individual factors operate. It has been assumed that, among individual factors predisposing for committing an offense as a juvenile, personality factors play a substantial role. Thus, juvenile offenders possess the trait of juvenile delinquency, but possess particular personality traits that, perhaps, form or contribute to the propensity for such offenses.

The essay starts with personality-trait-based approaches, continues with typologies of juvenile offenders, reflects on the influences of psychodynamic ideas, continues with a discussion of the impact of social cognitive theories, and comments on the potential of life-narrative-oriented approaches to juvenile delinquency. The key observation that crystallizes at the end of this essay is that there are multiple applications of personality-oriented approaches in working with juvenile offenders. No single theory or approach has been instrumental in solving the many

¹To illustrate, the state of Connecticut had 841,688 children under the age of 18 in the year 2000; there were 1,600 unique admissions to detention centers that year. Thus, only ~0.002% of children under the age of 18 were detained. This is a rough estimate (not corrected for age bands), but it provides the reader with an idea of "prevalence" of juvenile offenders in the general population of children and adolescents.

complex tasks faced by the field, but, collectively, they provide an integrated framework for the everyday operations of the field of forensic juvenile psychology. In fact, what many researchers and practitioners in the field are finding is that their operations unfold at the junction of personality theories, utilizing ideas, approaches, and instruments from the field of personality at large.

Personality Traits

There is a large body of the literature investigating the connections between personality traits and delinquent and antisocial behavior, both in juveniles and adults. Traits are viewed as habitual patterns of behaving, thinking, and feeling (Kassin 2003). Personality traits (unlike personality states) are viewed as stable within an individual across the lifespan, but variable across individuals at any given moment. The fundamental assumption of the trait theories of personality is that traits are latent indicators of humans that can be relatively accurately assessed by a set of statements judged by a person him/herself as characteristic (or not) of his personality and that these latent indicators are predictive of observed indicators such as behavior, feelings and emotions, and relationships. As there is an endless number of statements that can be generated about habitual patterns of human lives, the dominant approach to reducing the dimensionality of the resulting collections of statements has been factor analysis. The assumption here is that these statements cluster together providing, collectively, an indicator of a particularly empirically derived trait of personality. Having early ideas introduced by Allport (1937), today's scientists differentiate primary (typically referred to as traits or higher-order traits) and secondary (typically referred to as facets of lower-order traits) personality traits. It has been suggested that three (Eysenck 1967, 1991) to five (Costa and McCrae 1992; McCrae and Costa 1987) primary personality traits are sufficient to describe the major dimensions of an individual's personality; yet, these suggestions are not universally accepted (Saucier and Goldberg 1998). It is

important to note that pretty much every trait theory of personality has an assessment device based on it; in addition, there are many atheoretical (i.e., not linked to any particular personality theory) personality inventories.

Numerous personality inventories (and, correspondingly numerous trait theories) have been utilized in forensic settings. An important difference between these inventories and theories, however, is whether they focus on typical (i.e., those that are present and distributed in the general population) or atypical (i.e., those that are derived in the context of studying specific subpopulations and are present in the general population at a very low frequency) traits.

Typical Personality Traits and Their Associations with Delinquent and Antisocial Behavior

Theories of normal personality (John et al. 2008; McCrae and Cost 2008), and thus, assessment devices that capture typical personality characteristics, have been applied in forensic settings. For examples, using the data generated by Tellegen's assessment of the Big Three—the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire, MPQ (Tellegen 1985)—and numerous assessments of the Big Five (Heaven 1996; Krueger et al. 1994; Miller and Lynam 2003), Miller and Lynam (2001) carried out a meta-analysis and reported that, across different personality inventories, there are similar personality traits that exhibit robust associations (either negative or positive, depending on the texture of the trait) with delinquent and antisocial behavior, namely agreeableness ($d=0.37$), conscientiousness ($d=0.25$), and to a lesser degree, neuroticism ($d=0.09$). Similarly, yet another meta-analysis (Malouff et al. 2005), also highlighted these traits with the behaviors in question, with large effect sizes ($d=0.80$ for agreeableness and $d=0.64$ for conscientiousness). In addition, there have been investigations of lower-order facets of broad personality traits; these facets have been reported to be more sensitive and differentiating clinically (De Clercq and De Fruyt 2003; Paunonen and

Ashton 2001). The lower-order facets that have been shown to be associated, also with a relatively impressive effect size (~20–25% variance explained), with delinquent and antisocial behavior were trust—agreeableness, excitement-seeking—extroversion, self-discipline—conscientiousness (Heaven 1996) and straightforwardness and compliance—agreeableness and deliberation—conscientiousness (Miller et al. 2003). The apparent nonoverlap in facets, although there is a consistent overlap in traits, can be explained, at least in part, by the fact that in both studies the decision was made to examine only a subset of the 30 facets. Of note also is the observation (Trull et al. 2001) that a lower-order facet may be associated with the behavior in question even though the higher-level trait might not (e.g., extroversion, Heaven 1996). This general pattern of findings indicating the presence of the link between personality traits and delinquent and antisocial behavior, obtained in college (Heaven 1996) and community (Miller et al. 2003) samples, has been observed, with certain specific discrepancies, in a comparative study of juvenile delinquents and normative peers (Corff and Toupin 2009). Specifically, the two groups varied significantly, with observed effect sizes from medium ($d=0.40$) to large ($d=0.93$) on two traits, agreeableness ($d=0.78$) and neuroticism ($d=0.65$), and 12 facets (angry hostility—neuroticism, depression—neuroticism, impulsiveness—neuroticism, vulnerability—neuroticism, warmth—extroversion, excitement-seeking—extroversion, values—openness, trust—agreeableness, straightforwardness—agreeableness, compliance—agreeableness, tender-mindedness—agreeableness, competence—conscientiousness). One notable specific group discrepancy was the lack of differences between the two groups on the trait of conscientiousness. Interestingly, in another study, the conscientiousness—delinquent/antisocial behavior connection was missing (Van Dam et al. 2005). Another group discrepancy, mentioned in the literature before, but to a lesser degree (e.g., Ferrer et al. 2010), concerned the trait of neuroticism. Interpreting these differences in findings, researchers (Corff and Toupin 2009) have pointed out the most obvious causes of the discrepancy—the

differences in the natures (college, community, and youths with delinquent records), constellations (both or only one gender) and sizes of the samples. Thus, although there appears to be a robust general connection between particular typical personality traits and facets, and delinquent and antisocial behavior, specifics of this connection might vary depending on demographic and other factors. It has also been observed that, although these traits appear to differentiate samples with and without records of delinquency, they do not appear to differentiate incarcerated male juveniles by offense type or severity, while other factors (e.g., trajectory of criminal development and a possible neuro-maturational gap) do appear to do so (Nederlof et al. 2010). Similarly, typical personality traits have not been found to be powerful predictors of recidivism; once again, other factors, such as demographic characteristics and previous interactions with the court seem to be more powerful predictors of reoffending (Trulson et al. 2005; van der Geest and Bijleveld 2008; van der Geest et al. 2009). Yet, it is important to note that typical personality traits demonstrate associations with a broad range of other delinquent behaviors, such as illicit drug use (Hundley 1986), nicotine and alcohol use (Elkins et al. 2006), substance abuse (Martins et al. 2008), delinquent sexual behaviors and maladaptive sexual attitudes (Bogaert 1993).

Atypical Personality Traits and Their Associations with Delinquent and Antisocial Behavior

Atypical personality traits are those that, although present in the general population, appear to be either rare or not normally distributed. Their appearance in the literature is typically associated with studies of a particular group or groups of individuals that are distinct from the general population (e.g., individuals with schizophrenia or individuals with criminal records). In an attempt to characterize these differences, psychologists and psychiatrists have developed constructs capturing these atypical traits and generated corresponding theories.

Although applicable in specific inquiries with the general population, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) was designed, in part, to be used with a forensic population and is the most frequently used self-report instrument utilized in forensic settings (Pope et al. 2000) due, largely, to the availability of corresponding validated scales to assess response validity (Strong et al. 2006). There are volumes of research on the MMPI, making it one of the most empirically grounded personality assessment devices. Although researched less than the MMPI, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory—Adolescent, MMPI-A (Butcher et al. 1992), is also supported by hundreds of empirical publications (Baum et al. 2009). When these publications are considered collectively (Baum et al. 2009), it appears that group indicators for samples of juvenile offenders are subclinically elevated (i.e., elevated right up to below the clinical threshold) on basic (psychopathic deviate, *Pd*; paranoia, *Pa*; and hypomania, *Ma*) and content scales (conduct disorders, *A-con*; school problems, *A-sch*; and negative treatment indicators, *A-trt*). In addition, the MMPI-A has been stated to be externally valid, with the most powerful predictor variables exerting medium to large effect sizes (Baum et al. 2009). Overall, it seems to function well with juvenile offenders (Hand et al. 2007; Hays and McCallum 2005; Pinsonneault 2005). To illustrate, juvenile male offenders were reported to be distinguished, as a group, from juvenile male psychiatric patients by multiple scale scores, including infrequency (i.e., the testee “faking bad”) 2 (*F2*), social avoidance (*Si2*), repression (*R*), and alcoholism (MacAndrews Alcoholism Scale Revised, *MAC-R*) (Archer et al. 2003). There is also evidence that numerous MMPI-A validity and clinical scales can be instrumental in distinguishing male and female adolescents in a correctional sample from non-correctional adolescents, and adolescents in correctional facilities faking good (Stein and Graham 1999). The same researchers investigated the capacity of the lie scale (*L*) to differentiate, among incarcerated teens, substance abusing and non-substance abusing youth, when they filled out the MMPI-A under two instructions, the stan-

dard and the instructions to fake good (Stein and Graham 2005). It has also been reported that the *F*, *F1*, and *F2* scales and the *F-K* index (i.e., infrequency-defensiveness) discriminated adequately between groups of nonclinical adolescents instructed to fake bad and both the clinical and nonclinical adolescents who received standard instructions (Lucio et al. 2002). There are also data on the prediction of recidivism, with both basic (*Pd*) and content (*A-con*) scales accounting for 32% of the variance in recidivism (Peterson and Robbins 2008).

A fertile construct in research on individuals with criminal careers (i.e., individuals who first offend as juveniles and then remain on the criminal path through the majority of their lifespan) has been the construct of psychopathy. It has long been present in the literature, but its penetration into mainstream psychological research has not been without controversy (Vaughn and Howard 2005). There are many definitions of psychopathy (Cleckley 1976; Hare 1996a, b; Lynam 2002; McCord and McCord 1964), which differ on many points, but they agree, in general, that this construct may be conceived as a condition (psychopathy), personality type (psychopathic personality) or personality trait of individuals, primarily but not only (and more so recently) males, who appear “aggressive, self-centered, callous, guiltless, impulsive, sensation-seeking, interpersonally exploitive, deceptive, low in fear and anxiety, unable to learn socially approved ways of satisfying immediate needs, and unable to develop warm affective bonds with other persons” (Vaughn et al. 2008, p. 408). Recently, there has been a true explosion of research on psychopathy in childhood and adolescence. Here, only major highlights of this research are presented.

Most researchers of criminal behavior and psychopathy in adulthood agree that adult psychopathy is one of the key indicators of repeated violent offending (Patrick et al. 1996), and that adult psychopathy appears to originate from delinquent behaviors and other conduct problems present at earlier developmental stages (Saltaris 2002). It has also been observed that the development of psychopathy seems to be closely related to experiences of trauma in childhood (Campbell

et al. 2004; Krischer and Sevecke 2008; Lang et al. 2002). Yet, the literature is replete with debates on whether psychopathy (or psychopathic traits) in adulthood and childhood are the same (Lindberg et al. 2009) and whether childhood psychopathy can be reliably assessed and utilized as a prognosis indicator (Edens et al. 2001; Seagrave and Grisso 2002; Steinberg and Scott 2003).

Depending on the specifics of the assessment device used to assess psychopathy in children and adolescents, it has been reported that 9–59% of juvenile offenders demonstrate psychopathy-like personality characteristics (Campbell et al. 2004). When characterized as a group compared to other juvenile offenders, individuals with psychopathic traits tend to commit violent acts, higher in both number (Dembo et al. 2007; Derefinko and Lynam 2007; Frick et al. 2003a) and degree of seriousness (Caputo et al. 1999; Kotler and McMahon 2005; Loper et al. 2001). Juvenile offenders with (or with more) psychopathic traits tend to demonstrate more institutional violence while being detained or incarcerated (Forth et al. 1990). A recent analysis has pointed out the presence of consistent correlations (between 0.20 and 0.40) between measures of violence and psychopathy in 11 studies of juvenile offenders (Edens et al. 2001). Thus, juvenile offenders with psychopathy or with higher scores on psychopathic traits tend to be both more prominent (i.e., committing more and more serious crimes) and noncompliant with the juvenile criminal justice systems (DeLisi and Vaughn 2008; Harpur and Hare 1994; Harris et al. 1991; Porter et al. 2001; Vaughn and DeLisi 2008; Vaughn et al. 2007). Hence, at least concurrently, the characteristics of juvenile psychopathy resemble that of adult psychopathy (Lynam and Gudonis 2005). There is also evidence that adolescent psychopathic features are quite stable (Loney et al. 2007). Juvenile offenders possessing these features tend to recidivate more quickly (Långström and Grann 2002). It has also been noted that these juveniles tend to be characterized by shorter periods between offending (Brandt et al. 1997). Correspondingly, it has been argued that psychopathy may be the single best predictor

of future violence and recidivism (Harris et al. 1991; Myers et al. 2010; Salekin et al. 1996; Serin and Amos 1995), predicting multiple dimensions of the delinquent career and overpowering the effects of demographic and available risk factors (Vaughn et al. 2008).

Of note also is that the psychopathy trait appears to be associated with important indicators that, in turn, are often either characteristic or predictive of delinquency and antisocial behavior. Thus, youths possessing high levels of psychopathic traits tend to be fearless, impulsive, self-centered, and involved in multiple problem behaviors (Vaughn et al. 2008). Moreover, juveniles with higher scores on the psychopathy trait have been shown to exhibit worse performance on neurological, attentional, and sometimes intelligence testing (Hiatt et al. 2004). They also appear to differ in the ways they process emotional stimuli (Kimonis et al. 2008), which is thought to be related to weaknesses in the development of the affective components of conscience, a characteristic of psychopaths (Frick and Morris 2004). Interestingly, when the concept of psychopathy was just emerging in the literature, it was argued (Cleckley 1976) that psychopaths were characterized by higher IQ compared to their nonpsychopathic antisocial peers. It appears, however, that this difference is not substantiated; the literature reports either no differences in IQ among psychopathic and nonpsychopathic youths (Loney et al. 1998), or that psychopathic youths have lower IQs (Hecht and Jurkovic 1978). Also, it has been reported that psychopathic youths are more likely to report being subjected to harsh or maladaptive parenting strategies (Farrington 2006). In addition, there is also evidence that juveniles with the elevated trait of psychopathy demonstrate higher levels of substance use and abuse (Dembo et al. 2007; Derefinko and Lynam 2007; Taylor and Lang 2006) and other mental health problems.

Also of interest is an observation that psychopathy, as a trait, is a complex construct itself. Of its multiple factors and facets, whether empirically or theoretically derived, it appears that the callous and unemotional aspect of psychopathy has a particular association with delinquent and antisocial

behavior. For example, it has been reported that juvenile sex offenders who earn high scores on callousness and unemotionality had a greater number of sexual offense victims, used more violence with their victims, and engaged in more sexual offense planning than those low on these traits (Lawing et al. 2010). Similarly, the importance of this facet of psychopathy has been demonstrated longitudinally. Specifically, the degrees of callousness and unemotionality measured in seventh grade were highly predictive of five of the six antisocial outcomes—general delinquency, juvenile and adult arrests, and early adult antisocial personality disorder criterion count and diagnosis (McMahon et al. 2010). Callousness and unemotionality, along with impulsivity and irresponsiveness, have been reported to be good concurrent predictors of violent and nonviolent delinquency, delinquency versatility, and risky sexual behavior in a Croatian sample of nonreferred children and adolescents (Ručević 2010). Of interest is that impulsivity and irresponsiveness were reported to manifest themselves differentially for boys and girls: for boys, they had stronger associations with nonviolent delinquency and delinquency versatility, but for girls—with risky sexual behavior (Ručević 2010).

Yet, as mentioned above, there is considerable debate pertaining to both the validity and reliability of the assessment of psychopathy in children and adolescents due to concerns about the stability of this trait. Substantial general developmental literature suggests that personality traits in general tend to manifest and coalesce in middle childhood but do not crystallize and become stable until late adolescence or early adulthood (Seagrave and Grisso 2002). Correspondingly, there are concerns that the predictive power of various measures of psychopathy in children and adolescents might be limited to concurrent associations (Edens and Cahill 2007). The empirical literature committed to this issue, at this point, cannot be interpreted unequivocally. For example, researchers (Cauffman et al. 2009) used three distinct approaches [a clinical interview method—the Psychopathy Checklist: Youth Version, PCL:YV (Forth et al. 2003), a self-report measure—the Youth Psychopathic Traits Inventory (Andershed

et al. 2002), and a personality-based approach—the NEO Psychopathy Resemblance Index (Lynam and Widiger 2007)] to quantify juvenile psychopathy in a large-n study of short- and long-term recidivism. Quantitatively, the data showed a rather limited overlap between the three indicators (the correlations ranged from 0.26 to 0.36) and, qualitatively, there were substantial measure-based discrepancies between labeling individuals as psychopathic or not. Moreover, the long-term predictive power was reported to be low. The researchers interpreted these findings as raising serious concerns about the use of these measures for legal or clinical treatment decisions (Cauffman et al. 2009). Other studies indicate that psychopathy can be reliably assessed in childhood and adolescence, and that psychopathic traits are relatively durable (Frick et al. 2003b; Lynam 2002; Moffitt et al. 2002). For example, some researchers (Lee et al. 2009) indicate moderate to high stability of psychopathic traits, as indexed by total scores, and low to moderate stability of psychopathic traits at the factor (and facet) level. Of note also is that, when homicidal juveniles and adults were compared, both samples had distinct psychopathic subgroups, but there were age-related differences in the manifestations of factors and facets (Lindberg, et al. 2009). Finally, it is important to state that psychopathy is not the only “rare” trait that has been investigated as a predictor of delinquency. Although substantially lower in numbers, there are publications on other traits, such as Machiavellian and sadistic traits, which, along with narcissism have been described as the “Dark Triad” of personality (Jakobwitz and Egan 2006; Lee and Ashton 2005; Paulhus and Williams 2002). For example, results from one study (Chabrol et al. 2009) indicated the promise of considering sadistic traits as predictors of juvenile delinquency (i.e., committing offenses as a minor). Yet another study stressed the importance of considering the role of early manifested malevolent aggression (Clarbour et al. 2009).

In summary, there is a vibrant and productive subfield of research and practice in forensic juvenile psychology that engages trait approaches to personality. This field utilizes multiple theories

(and, correspondingly, multiple inventories) of personality, but the general premise of this utilization is shared by all professionals in the field, which is to characterize, descriptively, personality traits of juvenile offenders, and attempt to use these descriptives (i.e., specific traits individually) or profiles (i.e., specific traits collectively) to predict behavior concurrently (i.e., institutional violence while being detained or incarcerated) or prospectively (i.e., recidivism). The consensus in the field is that the tremendous heterogeneity within juvenile offenders prohibits the possibility of a particular personality trait (or a specific constellation of traits) being referred to as “descriptive” or “prescriptive” of juvenile offenders. Yet, it looks like, as a group, juvenile offenders tend to be marked by elevations of a number of specific traits that, perhaps, as a constellation of risk factors, elevate the propensity for committing an offense. Correspondingly, when specific personality trait assessments are used in clinical or research work with juvenile offenders, the most common denominator of this usage is in providing specific insights into the propensity to recidivate, rather than to marking a particular trait as the basis of juvenile offense.

Taxonomies and Typologies

The realization that juvenile offenders are an extremely heterogeneous population is far from new (Ewing 1990). Yet, there is still no clear understanding of how this population can be subdivided into more homogeneous subgroups (Greco and Cornell 1992; Megargee 1970), either concurrently or prospectively (Frick 2004; Loeber 1996; Loeber et al. 1997), and whether such subdivisions can lead to treatment and prevention (Vaughn et al. 2008; Zagar et al. 2009). Influenced in part by early personality theories (Allport 1937) and in part by typological approaches from the hard sciences (Bryant 2000), the field of criminology has also developed a number of taxonomies and typologies to capture the heterogeneity of life trajectories and personalities among juvenile delinquents. The main premise of this research is that the complexity

and heterogeneity of delinquent and antisocial behavior cannot be captured by a single set of descriptors or a single etiological mechanism. In fact, coherent, internally consistent and distinct categories are needed to overcome and systematize the heterogeneity of the presentations and etiologies of delinquent and antisocial behavior (Gibbons 1975; Huizinga et al. 1991; Jones and Harris 1999; Lykken 1995; Moffitt 1993; Paternoster and Brame 1997; Van Voorhis 1994; Zhang et al. 2002).

Roughly speaking, taxonomic research in criminology can be subdivided into two large categories, although both the categories and their underlying foundation have been questioned in the literature (Britt 1994; Hirschi and Gottfredson 1994; Thagard 1992). One category is oriented toward behavior and unifies life and crime pathways that are assumed to differentiate distinct criminal careers (Nagin and Land 1993). The other category is oriented toward individual characteristics of offenders and is based on psychosocial, biological, personality, and other explanatory factors (Harris and Jones 1999; Lykken 1995; Mealey 1995; Moffitt 1993; Van Voorhis 1988). Of note, however, is that the creators of the first type of taxonomy (Lykken 1995; Mealey 1995; Moffitt 1993) often construct their classifications based on their analyses of the literature. Empirical evidence is not available to substantiate these typologies; they are essentially theoretical prototypes (Moffitt 2003) or armchair taxonomies (Lykken 1995) rather than empirically derived systems of offender classification. The contributors to the second category of taxonomies exercise dimensional approaches and are interested in developing general theories of delinquency and antisocial behavior (Osgood 2005; Sampson and Laub 2005). There are ongoing efforts to collect empirical data to falsify existing taxonomies, although the results of these studies are contradictory (Aalsma and Lapsley 2001; Harris and Jones 1999; Huizinga et al. 1991; Jefferson and Johnson 1991; Jones and Harris 1999; Mezzich et al. 1991; Nagin and Paternoster 2000; Potter and Jensen 2003; Skilling et al. 2001; Sorensen and Johnson 1996).

Recently, Brennan and colleagues (2008) summarized the literature and presented the following

typologies and taxonomies as the most prevalent in the literature. The first type is referred to as *normal or situational offenders*. Individuals constituting this type are viewed as typical young people who engage in minor accidental delinquent behavior, which is thought to arise in stressful and difficult situations when normal coping strategies do not function (Aalsma and Lapsley 2001; Huizinga et al. 1991; Lykken 1995; Van Voorhis 1994). The second type, according to Brennan and colleagues (2008), is referred to as *socialized delinquents, common sociopaths, and/or subcultural offenders*. Individuals in this category, referred to as common sociopaths (Lykken 1995), subcultural identifiers (Warren 1971), socialized conformists (Jesness 1988), secondary sociopaths (Mealey 1995), and lower class gang delinquents (Miller 1958), exemplify delinquent and antisocial behavior that echoes social deprivation or reflects atypical socialization. Social deprivation and poor socialization, in turn, are thought to arise in families with incompetent or delinquent parents, in the context of a delinquent peer group, and/or while submerged in oppositional criminal subcultures. The next category includes individuals who are mostly adequately socialized, but, during their adolescent years, temporarily (Moffitt et al. 2001) identify with, mimic, or are associated with their delinquents peers while forming autonomy, searching for meaning, or solving other developmental tasks. This type is referred to as *adolescence-limited offenders* (Lykken 1995; Moffitt 1993). Brennan and colleagues' fourth type is referred to as *neurotic or internalizing delinquents*. Social withdrawal, depression, social anxiety, hostility and mental health problems are common in these individuals. Moreover, these lives are often characterized by severe parental abuse, interpersonal rejection and neglect. Brennan and colleagues draw parallels between individuals in this group and in the group of the internalizing pattern of delinquency (Moffitt 2003). Finally, the fifth category includes *under-controlled serious delinquents—impulsive and unsocialized*. This is, clearly, the most serious category, including individuals with early onset of problem behaviors, serious versatile crimes and such personality traits as impulsivity, risk-taking,

aggression, callousness, and superficial charm. Other theorists refer to similar categories as life-course persistent offenders (Moffitt 1993), primary psychopaths (Lykken 1995), primary sociopaths (Mealey 1995), unsocialized psychopaths (Quay 1990), immature aggressive offenders (Jesness 1988), and psychopaths (Frick 2004; Hare 1996a, b; Skilling et al. 2001). In an attempt to examine selected theoretical taxonomies (Lykken 1995; Mealey 1995; Moffitt 1993), Brennan and colleagues worked with two large samples of delinquent youth (~1,500 individuals each). It was reported that seven clusters recurrently emerged across replications, two of which were analogous to Moffitt's two main categories, and three—to Lykken's sociopathic, neurotic-internalizing and normal types. Yet, the authors remarked that both the statistical and content properties of the classifications were not perfect and further efforts were needed to clarify the findings (Brennan et al. 2008).

The conclusion of Brennan and colleagues, in general, illustrates the situation of the field, where there are many only partially empirically supported and often contradictory typologies. There are many reasons for such a state of affairs, ranging from a principal question of applicability of typological approaches to people whose behavior and motivation are dynamic and unstable rather than, let us say chemical elements whose properties are stable (Bryant 2000), to applied methodology issues (Lenzenweger 2004; Milligan 1996; Wishart 2003). Most importantly, however, delinquent and antisocial behavior is marked by multiple complexities across multiple interacting domains (Walsh 2002); with neither understood, typologies might not be possible, at least at the current stage of knowledge.

In summary, it is unclear, at least at this point, whether typological approaches to juvenile offenders, as developed with regard to both delinquent and antisocial behaviors and personality typologies, are useful and, if yes, how productive they are. So far, the most informative feature of typologies is their inclusion in the recidivism factor (i.e., whether a person, after committing a crime, recidivates or not). Yet, when defined on the basis of recidivism, a typology can have only

historical value; in other words, a person can be categorized only after criminal behavior has been repeated (i.e., after the person has recidivated) or after the person's life is over, or virtually over (i.e., while there is no "upper" limit for committing a crime, the likelihood of recidivating decreases among aging individuals).

Psychodynamic Influences

Juvenile forensic psychology and psychiatry has been heavily influenced by psychodynamic approaches to personality, with their capacity to utilize the depth of information and the breadth of observation pertaining to a single person (Westen et al. 2008). The heterogeneity of criminality, referred to above, also applies to every single individual within the juvenile justice system; these individuals are more different from each other than alike. Moreover, the last 20 years of developmental literature have convincingly shown that there is a tremendous amount of connectedness between victimization and perpetration; quite often, a child who is a victim of abuse is later an abuser him/herself. Clearly, psychodynamic theories of personality, with their rich texture of reliance on early developmental stages, have much to contribute to research and practice with troubled juveniles. This contribution is present at multiple levels. First, there are multiple intrinsic and yet delicate connections between psychoanalysis in its many shapes and forms and the attachment theory (Steele 2010). Second, there are psychodynamic typologies of criminal behavior which are idiographic in nature. These typologies are biographical and case-oriented; psychodynamic literature is replete with case analyses of court-involved individuals at different stages of their involvement with the system, and there are multiple insightful interpretations of the life stories of these individuals that have resulted in the generation of interesting typologies—Delinquency as Absence: Making the Absent Present; Delinquency as "Hole-in-the-mind": Evoking the Development of "Whole-of-mind"; Delinquency as "Concrete Symbol": Playing with the Concrete (Fairall and Gleeson 2007).

Third, there is an ongoing struggle for the preservation of the art of psychoanalysis in the face of the demand for evidence-based treatment (EBT) approaches. In fact, the advocacy for EBT in the field of juvenile justice is so strong that it has been referred to as "the latest attack upon psychoanalysis of any praxis other than reductionistic behaviorism" (Lewis 2009, p. 107). Yet, the most pronounced impact of psychodynamic theories of personality on the juvenile justice system has been through its assessment devices, namely projective techniques. These techniques are widely used in the juvenile justice system, individually and in combination with other assessments (Silver 1963), both for various purposes within the system (Heilbrun et al. 2005) and for research purposes (Janson and Stattin 2003). Especially popular are projective assessment techniques, such as the thematic apperception test, TAT (Haynes and Peltier 1985) and the Rorschach inkblot test (Dean et al. 2007; Gibbs 1982; McCraw and Pegg-McNab 1989). However, although both tests are prominent in the work of practitioners in the system, the number of peer-reviewed publications on them is rather small.

Psychodynamic theories of personality are directly related to psychoanalysis as originally introduced by Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud, specifically its key concepts concerning the importance of internal psychological processes and childhood experience, the centrality of psychosexual development, the prominence of the conflict between the id (basic essence of existence), ego (rationality) and superego (morality), defense mechanisms, methods of elucidating (e.g., free associations) and resolving (e.g., interpretation including transference, defenses, and dreams) conflict-triggering experiences, and its key premise that human behavior and relationships are determined by both conscious and unconscious influences. Early ideas of psychodynamic theorists have been transformed by numerous scientists and practitioners working in this tradition (e.g., Anna Freud, Karen Horney, Melanie Klein, Donald Winnicott, John Bowlby, Erich Fromm, Erik Erikson, and numerous contemporary thinkers). There is no cohesive theoretical

interpretation of juvenile offending within this approach, although there are multiple specific applications of various constructs developed within psychodynamic ideas about personality to the work with juvenile offenders (e.g., Brodie 2007; Mizen 2003).

In general terms, crime is a product of a deviant structure of personality that is in itself a result of deep unresolved early conflicts that arose early in life (Brodie 2007). It is these conflicts that, through the power and energy of unconscious psychic pain, drive people to violence and aggression. Thus, serial violence involving abducting and torturing multiple victims has been explained as repeated attempts to resolve early conflicts of disrespect, punishment, and isolation. Similarly, in his writing, Erik Erikson (Erikson 1979) capitalized on the idea of finding resolutions to internal conflict as characteristic of adolescence and the driving force of its identity crisis. In this context, juvenile offending reflects a facet of this process of identity formation, reflecting the cognitive and social-emotional immaturity of juveniles, their inability to ascertain proper social channels for manifesting their identity, and their dependency on others in figuring out “the right way.”

This “normalization” of juvenile offending has been challenged by August Aichorn (1935), who argued that social demands by themselves did not and could not produce juvenile offending. Reflecting on the heterogeneity of the outcomes of the process of identity formation, he introduced the concept of latent delinquents that is those juveniles who seek immediate gratification for themselves without considering the effect of this on others. In the spirit of psychodynamic approaches, Aichorn referred to, as the source of individual differences between latent delinquents and other youths, troubled family life and early child development conflicts (Freud 1951; Schowalter 2000). But the impact of this work on the field was much broader than that, suggesting that the pressure of situations, no matter how charged those situations are, is always differentiated by other characteristics, those that are both inherited and interiorized by the person (Federn 1962).

The reference of Aichorn and others to early experience, especially to those of poor family life

resulting in abuse and maltreatment, generated a large amount of work, both within and outside psychodynamic approaches, focused on the connection between these traumatic experiences and juvenile offending. Within the psychodynamic approach, the family is conceptualized as, among other functions, the medium through which the child develops the personal tools that enable him or her to balance id, ego, and superego demands and cope with the pressure from the social world. The id-ego-superego dynamics are complex, and different byproducts of these dynamics going awry (e.g., the urge to be punished, feelings of being unloved, feelings of inadequacy and deserving of punishment, lack of compassion) are considered to be unconscious triggers of violence and aggression or specific mental states (e.g., psychosis), that lead to violence and aggression.

Psychodynamic ideas have been implemented in the psychology and psychiatry of juvenile offenders both in treatment and assessment, although the assessment applications are much more widespread. To illustrate, the literature on the application of the Rorschach with delinquent juveniles, although limited in size, is in general supportive of the instrument’s concurrent utility, reliability, and validity in this population (Liebman et al. 2005). For example, it has been shown, in a sample of adjudicated adolescents, that the Rorschach aggression variables of AG (Exner 1993), A1 and A2 (Holt 1977), and AgC and AgPast (Gacono and Meloy 1994), can be reliably scored and related to each other in a theoretically meaningful way. Yet, an examination of the reliability of Rorschach variables between the ages of 8 and 16 finds that most of the indicators are not stable (Exner et al. 1985). Correspondingly, it has been argued that Rorschach variables should not be viewed as reliable long-term diagnostic indices. A rather unique application of the Rorschach comes from the Solna study, an ongoing birth-to-maturity investigation of a birth cohort of 212 children in an urban Swedish community. They were recruited through their mothers before their birth, during the mothers’ visits to a prenatal clinic; every fourth woman was asked to participate and the refusal rate was ~3%. The recruitment unfolded

over a period of 3 years; all children were born between 1955 and 1958. The demographic characteristics of the sample indicate that it is representative of Swedish urban communities. The researchers collected multiple indicators of various aspects of child development from infancy through age 18 annually, and then three more times at the ages of 21, 25, and 36. The administration of the Rorschach occurred ten times, when the participants were 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14, 18, and 36 years of age. The results indicated that the Rorschach-based measures (maturity—ego differentiation and integration; aptitude, functioning intelligence; mood—glad, optimistic; self-esteem—secure, sure of own value; contact ability—good emotional contact ability; activity—enterprising, busy; ability to concentrate—to be able to apply oneself to one task, persistency; and ambition—to strive to do one’s best) predicted delinquent outcomes over and above other measures (i.e., maternal reports of delinquency); lower Rorschach scores indicated a higher risk of delinquency in adolescence and adulthood (Janson and Stattin 2003).

Research on the TAT is even more limited in number, especially in the juvenile setting. Yet, the instrument is widely used. For example, a Canadian survey (Haynes and Peltier 1985) on the usage of the TAT in juvenile forensic settings indicated that the majority of practitioners use the instrument as part of their assessment battery (with 6–10 cards, mostly). A substantial portion of practitioners, however, do not use the TAT because of time constraints and lack of guidance in the literature on standards of care and preferential significance and the interpretability of specific cards in working with juvenile offenders. Yet, this “research-needed” call has not elicited a response in the literature as yet.

In summary, historically among the first theories of personality to address delinquent and antisocial behaviors, psychodynamic theories and their related assessments remain central to the field of juvenile psychology and psychiatry. Although not necessarily well researched in the population of juvenile delinquents, projective personality techniques are widely used in the everyday work with court-involved children and

adolescents, generating information that, arguably, provides an insight into personality’s deep structures and allows us to appreciate the layers of developmental complexity that typically mark the road to crime, especially early crime.

The Influence of Social Cognitive Theories

A defining feature of social cognitive theories of personality is their attempt to understand the individual by adapting the person-in-context approach (Higgins and Scholer 2008; Mischel and Shoda 2008; Ryan and Deci 2008). In this approach, rooted in social learning theory (Miller and Dollard 1941), broadly speaking, personality is a product of the interactions among the cognitive and affective processes triggered by and embedded in the social context. These theories have impacted juvenile psychology and psychiatry both directly, through the development of applications of certain theories to juvenile antisocial behavior (Bandura 1999; Bandura et al. 1996; Caprara et al. 1998), and indirectly, through the emergence of new theories (e.g., Agnew 1992; Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990) specific to criminology, that have been conceived within the general framework of social cognitive theories of personality.

The central premise of social cognitive theories of personality posits that personality, in part, emerges from observing others while engaged in social interactions and experiences. One of the major general assumptions of these theories is that children model their behavior based on positive or negative feedback and in response to reactions they trigger from others. These “others” are typically referred to as adults the children are in contact with, whether real (e.g., parents, teachers, coaches, and so forth) or virtual (e.g., adults in mass media—TV, movies, radio, videogames). Among “others,” there are also peers. In other words, children learn from and follow examples of behaviors demonstrated by their real and virtual role models, observing rewards and punishment for these types of behaviors. Thus, if violence is demonstrated by many role models in

the child's life, the child can grow up believing that violent and aggressive behaviors are acceptable and rewarding. In fact, often, the child starts practicing violent and aggressive behaviors at home first, directing them at siblings and other family members and soliciting a reaction from parents. Thus, another major general assumption of social learning theory is in the role of vicarious learning—i.e., learning from other people's behavior and attempting to refrain from making mistakes in imitating the modeled behavior. In other words, children observe the behaviors of others and imitate them (Bandura 1989); the degree of success of imitation and, consequently, acquisition of a behavior is modulated by the extent of the child's self-efficacy—i.e., the child's own appraisal of his/her abilities to observe and imitate (Bandura 1988). Vicarious learning is a facet of social modeling, which includes not only observing and imitating, but also receiving instructions and guidance from others, mastering experiences, self-modulating physical and emotional states so that learning can occur more effectively, and soliciting from and providing to others verbal encouragement (McAlister et al. 2008).

To illustrate, Bandura's reasoning on delinquency and antisocial conduct engages his theory (Bandura 1986) through the concept of the moral self—an agent who is embedded in a broader social context, which both influences and is influenced by the self. Both moral (and immoral, or delinquent) actions can arise only through self-regulatory mechanisms that are rooted within individuals (i.e., his/her moral standards) and are exercised in response to an external stimulus. Early in development, conduct is regulated primarily through external leads (i.e., those of parents or social institutions) and social sanctions. Yet, as development unfolds, the regulatory focus moves from external to internal leads. A person should exercise his/her moral agency to both inhibit immoral behaviors and enhance moral behaviors. Tools and skills for doing so need to be acquired developmentally, through interactions with others in social situations (e.g., family, peers, and larger social settings). It is important to point out (Santrock 2008) the difference between the ability of an individual to be morally

competent (i.e., possessing the ability to perform a moral behavior) and his/her moral performance (i.e., actually performing morally in a specific situation). Moral competence is a multicomponential structure that refers to an individual's knowledge, capacities, skills, awareness of rules and regulations, and level of general cognitive functioning. Moral performance, however, is an application of moral competence in a specific situation, where rewards and incentives are in place and counterbalanced with punishment and losses. Thus, moral competence can dictate a realization of what is right and wrong (e.g., breaking into someone else's property), but a reward for a particular behavior can override this realization, so immoral (e.g., breaking into someone else's property and stealing valuables), rather than moral performance take place.

The literature on juvenile forensic psychology and psychiatry provides many relevant observations, obtained both through longitudinal research (e.g., Remschmidt and Walter 2010; van der Laan et al. 2010) and cross-sectional investigations (Barriga et al. 2009) on the contextual factors of delinquency. The general trajectory of this research first identifies a general source of contextual influences, then attempts to zoom in on a specific facet within this general source. For example, negative parenting styles and poor parental monitoring [i.e., tracking and surveillance of their children have been linked to various forms of delinquency (Biglan et al. 1995; Dishion et al. 1995; Metzler et al. 1994)]; positive parenting, on the contrary, is considered to be one of the most important protective factors (de Haan et al. 2010; Kerr et al. 2009). Recent investigations into the constructs of parenting styles and parent monitoring, however, have attempted to refine them and have pointed out the specific aspect of their multidimensionality that appears to be most relevant to delinquency, with a particular emphasis on child disclosure—i.e., children's spontaneous reporting of their behaviors (Fletcher et al. 2004; Lahey et al. 2008; Stattin and Kerr 2000). It has been observed that child disclosure appears to be triggered and aided by certain parenting behaviors, clarifying the translational dynamics of the role of parent monitoring in

delinquency and antisocial behavior (Soenens et al. 2006). Of note also is that child disclosure appears to be related to child temperament (Stattin and Kerr 2000) and adolescent personality (Eaton et al. 2009). In other words, the fact that a child discloses his/her behavior to parents seems to be one of the best protective factor against juvenile offending, but whether the child discloses or not depends on many other factors, both internal (i.e., his/her temperament and personality) and external (e.g., the degree of parental solicitation and control) to the child, once again stressing the complex relationships between the self, context, and action (Stattin and Kerr 2000).

Similarly, research into the peer-related social context has been central to the literature on juvenile delinquency. Yet, the specifics of these influences are not well understood. To illustrate, researchers have attempted to hypothesize about the dynamics of peer relationships in a small group of adolescents who refrain completely from delinquent behavior (Moffitt 1993). It has been suggested that these adolescents are protected from the influence of negative peer influence because they are unpopular and socially isolated due to some unappealing physical/personality characteristics. Thus, such teens are thought to refrain completely from delinquent behavior because they are social introverts who are excluded from normative peer activities, which are often led by peer role models who demonstrate delinquent behavior (Moffitt 1993). This theoretical assertion, however, has been recently challenged with an empirical analysis of the friendship network data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Chen and Adams 2010). This analysis has revealed a rather complex set of associations between the adolescent friendship network characteristics and delinquency abstinence, stressing, once again, the importance of identifying specific facets of social influences as they determine the development and manifestation of the self. Another recent finding in the literature specifying the particulars of the impact of peer relationships indicates the differential role of romantic engagement. It has been reported, based on the results of a large-scale longitudinal study among Swedish seventh and eighth grade students

who were assessed over a period of 3 years, that romantic relationships amplified girls' and boys' existing delinquency propensities, and that this amplification is stronger for girls than boys (Eklund et al. 2010). These studies illustrate probable points for the application of social cognitive theory by suggesting the kinds of behaviors that might be endorsed to certain subgroups of youth who are marked by specific demographic profiles. These endorsements might be made by youth celebrities through specially framed positive messages, whether regarding the prevention of juvenile offending or the promotion of moral behavior (Smith and Petty 1996).

As mentioned above, the field of criminology has generated a number of theories that are focused on juvenile delinquency, but, broadly speaking, may be viewed as representative of the cluster of social cognitive theories of personality.

The general strain theory postulates that social strains can impact children and youth and result in the generation of negative emotions, notably anger and depression, which can in turn result in delinquency and antisocial behavior. The sources of strain are typically grouped into three categories: the failure to achieve positively valued goals, the possible or actual loss of positively valued stimuli, and the presentation of stimuli noxious to individuals (Agnew 1992). A set of "other" factors that can modulate the connection between social strains and delinquency are contextual factors of family and peers and the coping skills of children and adults. There is a body of empirical evidence that supports key propositions of the general strain theory (Agnew and Brezina 1997; Agnew et al. 2002; Aseltine et al. 2000; Baron 2004; Broidy 2001; Mazerolle et al. 2003; Piquero and Sealock 2004). In addition, as research progresses, there are additional clusters of strain. For example, using a longitudinal design, researchers (Moon et al. 2009) focused on the relationships among key strains (now eight: family conflict, emotional and physical punishment by parents, emotional and physical punishment by teachers, financial stress, examination-related stress, being bullied, gender discrimination, and criminal victimization), situational- and trait-based negative emotions, conditioning factors, and delinquency.

While, in general, the results of this study supported the theory, they generated some questions about the correlation between situational- and trait-based negative emotions and their differential role in delinquent outcomes.

One more theory briefly mentioned here is the theory of self-control (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990). In the context of this theory, an individual's level of self-control results from the process of parental socialization during the first ten ($\pm$) years of life. Responsible and responsive parents are able to recognize, divert, or prevent deviant behavior early on and are likely to instill, by rewarding, correcting, and punishing self-control. Irresponsible and unresponsive parents, on the contrary, fail to inculcate self-control. Individuals with low self-control manifest a set of attitudes and behaviors. Specifically, they (1) exhibit here-and-now orientation; (2) prefer easy and simple tasks; (3) seek excitement and engage in risky behaviors; (4) do not believe in social institutions and long-term investment in them; (5) do not plan and do not like to plan; and (6) are self-centered, insensitive, impulsive, and nonempathetic. Although some, if not all, of these characteristics resemble specific personality traits (DeLisi et al. 2010), the authors of the theory state that self-control is not a personality construct (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990), and that personality traits that are related to crime are, in fact, derivatives of self-control (Hirschi and Gottfredson 1993). These statements, inevitably, have been empirically researched. Thus, the literature contains reports that a self-reported measure of self-control substantially correlated with conscientiousness (O'Gorman and Baxter 2002) and agreeableness (Miller et al. 2008), and with many other indicators of personality (Marcus 2003, 2004) assessed by a variety of inventories, such as the retrospective behavioral self-control scale (Grasmick et al. 1993), the self-control scale from the California Psychological Inventory, CPI-Sc (Gough 1975), the Sixteen-Personality-Factor-Questionnaire, 16PF-Q3 (Cattell et al. 1970), and the NEO-FFI (Costa and McCrae 1989). Researchers have also pointed out the connection between self-control and narcissism (Vaughn et al. 2007). Correspondingly, the jury is

still out on whether the theory of self-control adds something new to the field of criminology.

In summary, the central and most powerful action of social cognitive theories of personality, as they are applied to juvenile offending, is the way they merge together individuals and their contexts. This permits a broad approach to personality, in which not only juveniles (i.e., their personality traits, types of criminal pathways, and deep structures) are considered, but also their social contexts and, most importantly, their cognitive-affective representations of themselves and their contexts. These broad considerations are especially imperative in court, when decisions are being made about the futures of juveniles. Judges should be informed, in detail, not only about the personality traits of the juveniles, but also of the contextual characteristics of their lives and crimes, since, according to social cognitive theories, understanding the interactive nature of past behavior and taking into account both the person and the situation are crucial for predicting future behavior. In turn, as decisions (whether legal or policy) are made, to be most effective, they should be delivered to youth with an understanding of both the opportunities and constraints of social learning as depicted by social cognitive theory.

Personal Narratives and Life Story

Although not new by any means (Adler 1927; Bakhtin 1981; Tomkins 1987, 1992, 2008), the narrative approach to personality (Josselson et al. 2007; McAdams 2008; McAdams and Adler 2010) has recently gained much attention, moving into the center of the psychology of personality. The focus of this approach is personal narrative. Although there are now quite a few publications on this approach, it is fair to say it is a developing subfield of the field of personality. It is discussed here, however, because it appears to bring a particularly powerful angle to the analysis of juvenile delinquency, as exemplified by the analyses of normative adolescent development (McLean et al. 2007), although to my knowledge and through my survey of the literature, there are

no publications that ground this approach in juvenile forensic psychiatry and psychology. The principle assumption here is that a self-narrative is a representation of autobiographical memory which, in turn, is a process of reconstructing the self (Josselson 2009). This process is said to be guided by six common principles (McAdams 2008) (1) having a life story that connects the reconstructed past and looks into the imagined future is a natural feature of any person; correspondingly, these stories are important sources of information about individual differences between people; (2) a life story integrates personal traits and actions in time; in other words, they provide continuity to the texture of life as it unfolds allowing for transformation and change; (3) life stories are meant to be shared; they are told to others with the purpose of being connected to them, with different goals and for different reasons; (4) life stories are temporally unstable and reflect the flow of life; their content changes depending on the context of the person's life; (5) life stories are not culture free; they are replete with values of the group, family, religion, culture, and society the person belongs to and these values determine what stories are tellable (versus untellable); and (6) as life stories are products of the autobiographical memory, they, as any product, can be evaluated on a number of dimensions, such as coherence, complexity, and emotional charge.

Clearly, for a life story to be analyzed, it first needs to be produced. I would like to finish this section by referencing a number of life narratives that were produced by current inmates of Rikers Island and collected through the Student Press Initiative, SPI, supported by Columbia University (<http://publishspi.org/>). SPI is a psycho-educational intervention designed for incarcerated young adults to improve their literacy skills and to remediate their sense of attachment. For the past 7 years, SPI has partnered with the New York City Department of Education on Rikers Island to combine oral histories and narrative therapy methodologies to help participants write and process their life stories.

Analyses performed on the SPI narratives demonstrates that over 90% of participants are people of color who come from disadvantaged

inner-city neighborhoods filled with drugs, violence, and other risk factors for juvenile offending and failing schools. SPI staff teams visit Rikers weekly and their work involves helping students become familiar with the SPI process, interviewing students and transcribing the audio recordings, and then working with students on editing their transcripts to become complete narratives. Throughout this process, SPI staff also serve as mentors to students, asking questions about how the students have processed and continue to process their life events (Chen 2011). I have selected excerpts that constitute autobiographical comments of these young adult inmates on their maturational years. Again, these quotes are intended to illustrate the potential of the narrative approach in helping court-involved individuals develop their own understanding of who they are and why they committed the acts they committed.

Yenry F.

Where I grew up, it was crazy; there was a lot of violence. I tried to get away from it, but it always used to pull me in. Now, I can't really regret that. Because I am already going to say it in the get go that I ain't going to regret anything I've done or anything I say. But I forgive myself for doing that. There was no need for that, because something could have ended up happening to me. Thank God it didn't. I used to live right across the street from these projects in Manhattan. I was a bad little boy. I used to live right next to this store. I used to go in, grab me a couple chips, and get up out of there without having to pay for it. Yeah. I used to beat people up for a couple nice things that they used to have that wasn't mine. I was a gang member so I used to beat people up on the random. I used to have a lot of problems because of beef under the gang situation; they used to have beef with the other projects across the street. I used to go to the junior high school was right there on the block. So we used to run from there to the eastside. Any little kids, we used to knock them. Any little tough dudes we used to see. Everybody. We used to whip them; we used to catch them. Word? Boop, boop, boop, boop. Keep walking. Those were the days. I started being a gang member when I was 14. At the time, I was jumped by the rival gang of the gang that I was in, but I wasn't part of that gang at the time. I used to know a couple of the people from the gang that I joined, and they saw me almost get jumped. They came and they defended me, "Yo, if you all going to jump him, you all going to have to fight us, too." So they stopped. They ain't

want to fight. We got up out of there. Then I started chilling with them.

They asked me, "Yo, you want to join?" I was like, "Let me think about it." I went. Got in. Boom. Ended up doing what I had to do. Then I was official, nobody could say nothing to me. I knew my stuff. Everybody knew who I was. I felt happy. I felt good. And then more rival gang members started going to our school. We beat them up. Boom. Then they would leave the school. Then we'd wait again until more of them came. They ain't know. Boom. And when they used to go to another school, we used to go to that school to beat them up. I used to be bad. One time I went to the other school, I ended up seeing three of them, and we asked them. They like, "Nah, we not." But they started running. I'm like, if you all not, why you all started running? So we started chasing them and we beat them up. When I think about that now, I don't really feel no way. They should have never ran. That's I learned when I was in that gang. That's how we are. We was. Because a lot of us ain't with it no more. Yeah, you can say I'm a bad kid, but I don't really think I'm a bad kid. Everybody says I'm a good person. I'm a good person. I have no problems. I don't start no problems. If you start problems with me, we're going to get into something. I got my butt whipped a couple nice times, but then I moved to the Bronx. We moved because the apartment that we lived in Manhattan wasn't under my parent's name. It was under somebody else's name and something happened to that person. So we couldn't renew the lease.

Kenny H.

My name is Kenny, but you can call me "Mr. H." I'm from the Bronx, the projects. I'm about to be an older man. I'm about to be 20 and have a family, so I have to make choices for three people now. My wife is pregnant; she's three months along. So far, my life hasn't been that good. It was once a calm, nice, and decent life to live, but it's just hard; it really is. I've realized that you have to learn from your own mistakes and then make choices in a different way because of them. [...]

My birthdays have always been fun. My mom always brought her nice cakes, little apple cakes. I always celebrated my birthdays the way I wanted to. I lost my virginity on my fifteenth birthday, for example. That was the first time I ever felt happy. I felt like, "Yeah, I got girls that's getting mad over me, and I'm only fifteen." From that point on, I just started doing my own thing, you know, every birthday. I always needed to have a girl, but that was the first time I was ever really happy. I've been happy because my mom took me places, you know, because my mom did something for me, but for that birthday, I finally did something for myself. I didn't ask anybody to do anything for me that day, so that's why I felt so happy. For my 20th birthday,

I was going to try to get an outfit and go to the 40/40 Club. That's Jay-Z's club in Brooklyn. I was trying to go there because Jay-Z's birthday is the same day as mine. I wanted to celebrate with him, so I could feel that I accomplished something, that I did something for me. Now I can't even do that, but hopefully in time I can.

Claire C.

Between the ages 9 and 10, fourth and fifth grade, I started doing things badly. I started acting out because I wanted to know what it was like. I was raised to not do anything the world did, which was nothing bad, so I wanted to see what it was like. And my mother wasn't in the picture, or father, so I had a lot of anger and I never expressed myself. I would steal from my grandma, go hide out at my best friend house, smoke cigarettes. My grandma used to work all hours and I was a very mature, intelligent young lady, so my grandma gave me a key. I remember I had got suspended from school for starting a fire in the girls' bathroom. When I got home, I thought she would be there waiting, but she wasn't. I know I was going to get the whoopin' of my life, so I put newspaper in my jeans to be prepared. She came home and didn't say a word. For two whole days, I was scared and that right there was the worst whoopin' I've ever had: Silence. I felt so bad. My grandma was getting tired, raised eight children plus two more, her grandkids, and one's acting out. Damn! My grandmother would call my mother and tell her the news about how I was acting out around that time. I was 11 going on 12 years old. So we sat in the living room when my mother arrived. We knew that our mother was coming to get us for good. My grandmother thought my mother was only coming to get us for welfare checks. After they discussed the arrangement, we left with our mother.

Jane T.

My name is Jane T., but people call me Slim. I am from the South Bronx. Things were a little rough. My mother was a single parent. There was five of us, three girls, two boys. And my mother used to struggle to buy us what we needed. It was rough on her. My mother used to go out and sell fried foods, Spanish fried foods, to provide us with what we needed. And we had to help her, go out with her. I didn't used to want to go because I used to be embarrassed that the people from school would see me. But if I wanted a pair of sneakers, I had to go. If I wanted something, I had to go with her. I don't remember my father bein' with us half the time. My father used to have a lot of women.

My father came back when I was like 9 years old, and he used to verbally abuse us. My mother was real scared of him. We moved from the South Bronx to somewhere in the Bronx. My mother used to make us do whatever my father wanted to do regardless of what it was. We never got sexually

abused or any of the above, but he was real strict and we would have to go to the room, not come out. They used to lock us in the room. My mother was not that loving type, only with my father. I have three sisters and two brothers. I am like the fourth one in the family. My siblings now, they all are very well educated. They have houses, they have homes, they have everything. The only one that has nothing is Jane, but that's because I chose that. They chose the right way, I chose the wrong way. And I guess that's what happened to me because at the age of 13 1/2, I went and I lost my virginity, and my mother threw me out to the streets. My father told her if I wouldn't leave, he would leave. And since the age of 13, I've been on my own, so it's been rough. I went from a little girl to a mother to a woman. I had to learn how to do everything by myself. The father of my kids, the guy that I met that I lost my virginity to, took me to his house; my parents married me at the age of 14. They married us because they told him if he wouldn't marry me that he was going to go to jail. I was 14; he was 16. I'm still legally married to that man. It was rough growing up. I learned how to cook. I learned how to do everything by myself. I had to learn the hard way, and I was doin' real good in school. I was in high school already, but I had to stop goin' to school because I was havin' a baby. And by the last month of my pregnancy, I didn't want to go to school. I was getting lazy and stuff like that, so I stopped goin'. The father of my child, he was young, he couldn't work, so my husband went to work with my family in order to provide for us, that's how he used to make his living. I started using.

But then as time went along, my husband started getting into bigger business, my family started making different moves, doing different things, and that's when my addiction escalated, but I still took care of my kids. I did everything for my kids. My husband always took care of me. I told him, "Listen, this is not working, you know. You're going to end up in jail, I'm going to end up being by myself with my daughter." My daughter was like 2 years old. So he went and he got a job for this company, Disclosure. He worked for that company, like, for sixteen years, but my husband was an alcoholic. He used to drink all the time. And after my husband stopped working with my family, I kind of like stopped everything because there was no money to come in for me to do anything, and I was young, I didn't know the streets or anything. So my husband got a job. After sixteen years, because of his alcohol addiction, he got fired. They caught him drinking on the job a couple times, and they warned him, they put him on probation. And I used to tell him, "Listen, you're going to end up losin' your job." And he didn't care, he used to still drink. One time he got arrested on the train drinking; they called his job. He had went to do an

errand for somebody at work, they had sent him to do something. He used to work with the computers and stuff like that. While he went out to go do that errand, he went and bought some liquor and got caught on the train with it, so he got arrested and they called his job. When he came back, he got fired. They fired him without no benefits, without nothing. I broke up with my husband. After fourteen years of living with my husband, I broke up with him and I went on my own.

Each of these narratives and all of them collectively substantiate some of the themes extrapolated in the various theories of personality discussed above. Reading the excerpt from Henry's narrative, one can map out the dissociation of moral competence and moral performance (he knew that stealing was bad, he knew he was bad, and he still did it), the essential negativity of peer influences through his gang membership and the satisfaction of knowing his identity, one recognizable by both himself and others and the feeling of belonging this recognition gave him. Kenny's story stresses the importance of sexual activities and romantic relationships in adolescence and young adulthood and underlies, once again, how important it is for these types of relationships to unfold to the satisfaction, within a societally appropriate context, of all of the involved. Claire's account provides a classic illustration of the urge to find out who one is and the striving for love and acceptance, within the psychodynamic context of her mother and grandmother. Finally, Jane's narrative shares the developmental trauma of being rejected by one's parents and forced into a marriage, having a baby but no future.

It is quite remarkable how different and yet similar these narratives are. They are different in terms of their general essences and their specific life events. They are similar because they are told by people residing in a correctional facility, Rikers Island, and these people are there for a reason: they have violated the law. Moreover, they violated the law more than once, previously as juveniles and now again as adults. This circumstance is important because, by definition, this makes them what was referred to above as "career criminals." The field has been trying to understand them, engaging a variety of theories, methods,

and assessment, resulting in a huge amount of knowledge and yet little understanding of how to effectively divert these individuals' lives into socially positive and productive careers.

A detailed analysis of these narratives is outside the scope of this essay. It is important to know, however, that, although the very idea of bringing these narratives to the light of the day (i.e., soliciting them, transcribing them, and analyzing them) should be credited to the rapidly developing field of the analyses of autobiographical accounts of personality, they can be processed by professionals working with juvenile delinquents in multiple ways. First, creating them and sharing them with a listener is often a therapeutic act of self-formulation for an individual. Second, these narratives present a great deal of information about the deep structures of the offenders' personalities, and, similar to projective techniques, may unveil information that is not typically shared. Third, there is much room for the quantitative analyses of the content of these stories and the elucidation of common themes related to the narratives themselves (e.g., 1–6 above, McAdams 2008) as well as to the shared and specific features of the lives of court-involved individuals. Thus, such narratives, potentially, might provide many insights into the field of juvenile justice, but, as it stands now, there is virtually no empirical evidence to substantiate this potential. The field needs to develop ways of collecting and processing them, as they generate tremendously rich insights into life journeys of juvenile offenders.

Conclusion

As indicated above, this essay was conceived to capture the general picture of the utilization of various selected theories of personality and the assessment devices each of these theories utilizes in the field of forensic juvenile psychology and psychiatry. The list of approaches exemplified here is far from exhaustive; so are the illustrations of ideas and empirical work within each approach. Yet, the essay provides a general picture of the lay of the land, that is, the jumble of ideas,

assessments, and findings, that underscore, once again, the complexity of human behavior in general, and law-offending behavior in particular. The evidence presented here crystallizes the observation that there are multiple and important applications of personality-oriented approaches in working with juvenile offenders. The most powerful point is that both concurrent and prospective predictions can arise at the junction of multiple theories and, correspondingly, multiple assessments, rather than from the specific angle of any one of them.

Author Note

Preparation of this essay was supported, in part, by funds from the American Psychological Foundation. I also wish to thank the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division for their cooperation and assistance in the work with court-involved children and youth in Connecticut, which forms both the premise and the context for this essay. I am grateful to Dr. Ruthellen Josselson for her comments on this manuscript and to Ms. Mei Tan for her editorial assistance.

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